

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
Case File No: AA-084225 (2850)  
AK-040-03-EA-001

Applicant: Ketchikan Public Utilities  
2930 Tongass Avenue  
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Type of Action: Right-of-way Grant

Location: W1/2, Sec. 20, T. 75 S., R. 91 E., Copper River Meridian

Prepared by: Shirley Rackley  
Realty Specialist

Preparing Office: Bureau of Land Management  
Anchorage Field Office  
6881 Abbott Loop Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507-2599

Date: November 25, 2002

I. INTRODUCTION

The Ketchikan Public Utilities (KPU) has requested a right-of-way grant for eight hundred feet of an existing road, forty feet wide, allowing them access to the Ketchikan Lakes Dam site from their power plant located within SE1/4SE1/4 of Sec. 19, T. 75 S., R. 91 W., Copper River Meridian. The road is within the Ketchikan Municipal Watershed and public access is controlled by a locked gate.

A. Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action:

The existing road provides access to the dam site from their power plant. This is an established power site withdrawal, however, this portion of the road is not within the withdrawal boundaries. Therefore, a separate right-of-way grant is needed.

B. Conformance with Land Use Plan:

No land use plan exists for this area. However, the environmental analysis assesses the impacts of the Proposed Action and provides a basis for a decision on the proposal [43 CFR 1610.8 (b)(1)].

C. Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, Plans or other Environmental Analyses:

The land is under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management outside the boundary of Ketchikan Lakes Power Project. This project has been given number 420 from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) by an order signed by the Department of the Interior (DOI). The FERC license was renewed August 29, 2000.

II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

A. Proposed Action:

The Proposed Action is to continue use and maintenance of an existing gravel road that crosses BLM administered land within the Ketchikan Lakes Power Project withdrawal and serves as an access road to the Ketchikan Lakes Dam. The road has served as access for many years but not all the road is within the withdrawal boundaries.

The Power Site withdrawal is surrounded by the Tongass National Forest and lands owned by the City of Ketchikan. The portion of the road that crosses BLM land is approximately 40 feet wide (driving surface 16 feet) and approximately 800 feet long, encompassing .73 acres. No new construction or surface disturbance is necessary.

The road is located in Ketchikan, Alaska and is located within the NE1/4SW1/4, Sec. 20, T. 75 S., R. 91 E., Copper River Meridian.

B. No Action Alternative:

The No Action Alternative would prevent KPU access to the Ketchikan Lakes Power Project.

III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The Proposed Action will not affect the land since the road has been established for many years and no new construction is planned.

A. Critical Elements:

The following critical elements of the human environment were not present or will not be affected by the Proposed Action and will receive no further discussion:

Air Quality  
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern  
Environmental Justice  
Farmlands (Prime or Unique)  
Floodplains  
Native American Religious Concerns  
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid  
Water Quality, Surface/Ground  
Wetlands/Riparian Zones  
Wild and Scenic Rivers  
Wilderness

1. Cultural Resources:

There are no known cultural resources near the land affected by the proposed right-of-way. No further consultation is necessary under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

2. Subsistence – ANILCA, Section 810:

The Proposed Action does not occur on Federal Public Lands as defined in ANILCA sec. 102(3), therefore, does not fall under the regulatory authority of the Federal Subsistence Board and appropriate Federal Subsistence Regulations for harvest of wildlife, fish and shellfish on Federal Public Lands in Alaska.

Therefore, at this time, the Proposed Action will not restrict Federal subsistence uses, decrease the abundance of resources, alter the distribution of resources, or limit qualified Federal subsistence user access from current existing conditions. No further analysis is necessary at this time.

3. Threatened and Endangered Species:

No consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considered necessary pursuant to Section 7 of the Act.

4. Invasive/Non-Native Species:

There are no rare or sensitive plant or animal species known to occur in the project area.

B. Vegetation:

Vegetation is absent along the roadway itself, and recolonizing in the shoulders. The vegetation on either side of the roadway is relatively undisturbed forest and the climax vegetation would consist of western hemlock and Sitka spruce. The understory is composed primarily of mosses and sedges with some forbs.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

- A. Impacts of the Proposed Action:  
No impacts will occur due to the action.
- B. Impacts of the No Action Alternative:  
Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no impacts.
- C. Residual and Cumulative Impacts:  
No residual or cumulative impacts will occur from this action.

V. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

- A. List of Preparers:  
Shirley Rackley – Realty Specialist  
Donna Redding – Archaeologist  
Jeff Denton – Subsistence Coordinator  
Bruce Seppi – Wildlife Biologist  
Debbie Blank – Botanist  
Mike Zaidlicz – Forrester  
Dave Kelley – Surface Management Specialist